

LONG ISLAND FORUM



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**THE
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FORUM**

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FOR LONG ISLANDERS EVERYWHERE

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DECEMBER, 1950

When the Ocean Froze Over

In Paul Bailey's History of Long Island, Vol. I, page 528, referring to the very cold winter of 1856-57 he quotes as follows from the Hempstead Inquirer of January 21, 1857: "The ocean opposite Moriches has been frozen so that the boys have skated a considerable distance from the shore, entirely around the wreck of the Irene, which recently went ashore at that place."

My father told me that as a boy he walked across the East river from Brooklyn to Castle Garden at the Battery, and returned the same way. Shortly after his return trip, the ice broke up into floes and quite a few people were trapped on the ice.

During February 1896 at Far Rockaway the Atlantic ocean froze over as far as one could see. I walked out on the ice a little ways. As the tide fell, the ice made a carpet on the beach. It was over an inch thick and did not taste salty as the freezing action had precipitated the salt.

This phenomenon was brought about by a smooth sea and intense cold. I have several times seen the ocean so smooth that not a ripple could be seen at the beach.

During the same year of 1896 the cold froze our water pipe and the ground around it from the main to the house, some 700 feet. Luckily the barn pipe did not freeze. My father rigged sprinkler hoses together from a tap in the barn to a tap in the laundry, covered the hose with salt-hay and planks and the house operated in this manner until some time in April.

During the frigid winter of 1917-18 the Long Island Sound froze over sufficiently between Oyster Bay and Greenwich, Connecticut, to permit cars to drive across, as seen and reported to me by Captain Johnson of the Seawanhaka - Corinthian Yacht Club.

John Good, Garden City.

* * *

An Ice-Boat Story

By Ralph Albertson

A few times in my boyhood Great

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Fire Island's Sunken Forest

TREASURE Island. Haunted Sentry Box, Sargosa Sea are practically synonymous with mystery and adventure, and the words heighten our curiosity. Likewise Sunken Forest. Our inquisitiveness strengthens when we consider that the Sunken Forest on Fire Island Beach is actually visible from Heckscher State Park.

Sunken Forest extends along the beach rather generally from Point O' Woods to Cherry Grove and elsewhere on the beach at more or less isolated locations. I have entered it many times from the bay by following Fishermen's Path. Other paths lead through it in crossing the beach and frequently considerable searching is required to locate the bay ends of these paths. It is almost impossible to make way through the forest except on an established path—too much like a jungle.

The most enlightening visit I ever made to the forest came three years ago (September 1947) as a member of a small group of horticulturally-minded people. There were Alex Sehlmeier, vice president of Stumpp & Walter Co.; Henry Reppa and Walter S. Tut-hill of the Long Island State Park Commission; George H. Peters from the Department of Public Works of Nassau County; Dr. George S. Avery, Jr., the Director of the Brooklyn Botanical Gardens; and David Schweizer of the New York City Department of Parks. Mr. Reppa arranged the trip and conducted the tour.

The captain of the L.I.S.P.C. boat "Channel Patrol" put in at Point O' Woods; and the sun broke through as we tied up; it had been raining and foggy. The Point O' Woods dock is not public but is for the residents of the community. Others need permission of the town fathers to use the dock.

Julian Denton Smith

Every house on Point O' Woods shows the force of sand carried on the wind. The face of each shingle just beneath the butt of the shingle above is grooved, cut away by blowing sand. Some grooves are almost through so that a slight lift breaks off the shingle. Window glass is often scratched by the sand and old panes give the impression of having been frosted.

The going is good on Point

possessed of the ability of both the parents—apparent to claim the beach as native domain.

Several clumps of Tall Wormwood (*Artemisia can-dada*) grow in the sand. This biennial is extremely interesting in that the growth the first year resembles a poppy, and the second year golden rod.

Our way continued east between two well-defined rows of sand dunes. The one to the south is the younger and is



Sand Dunes of the Outer Beach. Photo by the Author.

O' Woods as the walks are of concrete. We used them to the easterly end and then plowed off in the sand following the tracks of Coast Guard patrol cars. The day had turned hot and humid, making the hiking sweaty.

We came upon an old, wind-pruned pitch pine less than three feet high and perhaps twenty feet in diameter. A remarkable feature of the growth is the enormous root system—the roots spreading out all around and clearly visible for a distance of one hundred feet in every direction.

Not far from the pitch pine we found a new grass growing in the beach sand—*Panicum amaroides* (Gray). In appearance it seems to be a cross between plume grass and ordinary beach grass and deeply

greened on the north side by grass, poison ivy, and low woody vegetation. Its south side, like the south face of the older dunes, is bare—too steep and sun-dried for much growth of any sort to catch hold.

By counting the telephone poles we knew where to ascend the north dunes to locate the best path into the Sunken Forest. At the top of the dune we climbed into stunted trees for a look toward the bay over and across the tops of the trees of the forest. The tree tops form a surface of green as flat as a golf course. Trees do not jut up but hold to the common level. This is the result of wind action, a force seldom needfully reckoned with in up-land vegetation.

Scrambling down the path

on the forest side of the dunes we dropped beneath the trees into a peaceful, steamy, breezeless, greenish - lighted place. The hush spread out eternally, and unconsciously we spoke softer and with less haste, as one does in a cathedral. Birds fluttered about and called excitedly at our presence. No sound of the ocean came to us. It was perfectly still.

We walked on a century-old, depthless carpet of leafmold and humus. Dr. Avery attempted to dig through to sand but gave up after two and a half feet and no indication of anything but more humus. Farther on between some slight rises in the floor we discovered a sphagnum swamp of fresh water. The swamp oozed and gurgled and sucked under foot. I pulled a bit of bark from a stump and dropped it immediately. It was alive with creeping, crawling, slithering things. The place has all the markings of a Central American jungle where it is not safe to disturb or prod decaying vegetation. Everything is right for snakes in the Sunken Forest but I have yet to see one there.

The thick mat of trees overhead shows pepperidge, holly, sassafras, wild cherry, two or three kinds of oak, pitch pine, shadbush, beach plum, and blueberry with plenty of wild grapes and cat briers lacing the trees together.

We measured several holly trees at 41½ feet above the ground and found one 44 inches in diameter. By using various means of estimating the age of trees it seems certain that many of the holly trees easily exceed one hundred years.

We came upon the False Solomon's Seal (*Smilacina stellata*). Near the sphagnum swamp we found large beds of Wild Sarsaparilla (*Aralia nudicaulis*).

Following northward through the forest we moved into thickets of plume grass

taking over where the woody vegetation dwindles and thins. Before the path comes out on the bay it loses itself in salt water marshes into which the higher tides rise.

The name of the place—Sunken Forest—is of doubtful origin. Its seems entirely a colloquialism as I have not seen the name on any map. Indian legend and tales do not mention the spot. It appears that only with the arrival of motored boats has the locality become known to any extent.

Upon hearing the name for the first time people seem to get the impression of a submerged place, a sinking woodland, or a locality below sea level. I do not believe that one

of these impressions is correct. Sunken Forest is certainly not submerged for we walked through it. The woodland is not shrinking but actually building up due to the constant increase in humus year after year. I am unable to think of the place as below sea level for surely the tidal salt water marsh is at least a foot below the level of the water in the fresh water swamp. The swamp appears to have no outlet or overflow which indicates it is not an outcropping of an underground water table but more likely an accumulation of surface water.

Even though Sunken Forest

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Huntington Town Indian Deeds

THE TOWN of Huntington has a long and interesting history but unfortunately the records of the first five years have been lost. The early settlers were of Quaker and Puritan stock and they dealt fairly with the natives. The first company came across the Sound from the vicinity of New Haven, perhaps under the leadership of the Reverend William Leverich, and located in the eastern part of the present village, since known as "The Town Spot". The second contingent came from the Hempstead colony and the third came from Salem, Massachusetts. The Indians called the place Ketewomoke, meaning "where the sea flows out" and here the Matinecock sachem had his wigwam.

The "Old First Purchase" was made on April 2nd 1653 when Richard Houldbrooke, Robert Williams and Daniel Whitehead bought from Raseokon or Resorokon, sagamore of the Matinecks, all the land bounded on the west by Cold Spring Harbor; on the north by the sea; on the east by a river called Opatkontycke (a stream at the head of Northport Harbor), and extending south "to the utmost part of my bounds".

This was where the tract met the lands of the Secatogues and Marsapeagues and is now indicated by the Middle Country Road. For six square miles of land the price was six coats, six kettles, six hatchets, six hoes, six shirts, ten knives, six fathoms of wampum, thirty muxes and thirty needles. The sachem promised to send someone to mark out the bounds within twenty days. The deed was signed by the sachem and twenty-one members of the tribe but was not confirmed by Wyandanch which later led to a dispute between Huntington and Smithtown.

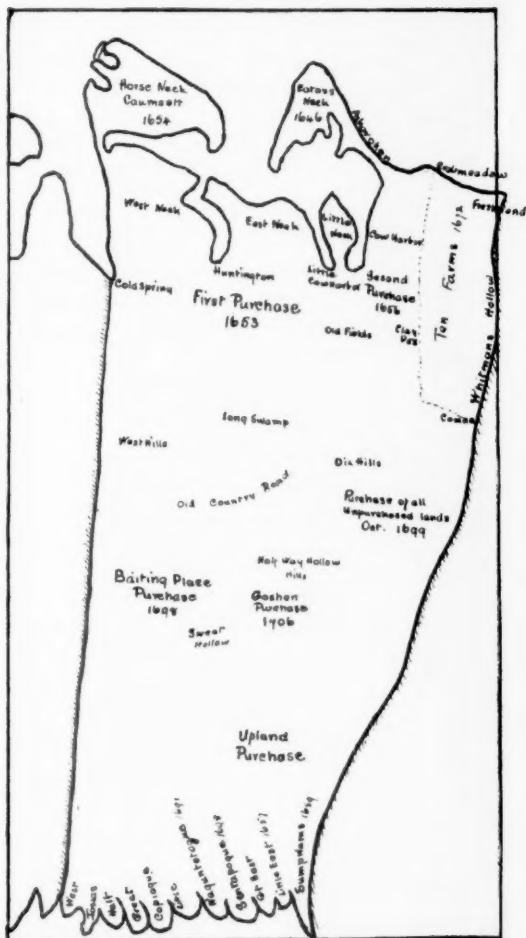
The second purchase called

John H. Morice

"the Eastern Purchase" began where the first purchase ended and included all the land on the north side of the island from Cow Harbor Brook (Opatkontycke) eastward to the Nissequake River, extending

south to the "great plaine" and including Eaton's Neck which had already been granted to Theophilus Eaton. The deed dated July 30th 1656 was signed by the marks of Asharoken (Raseokon) and eight chiefs of the tribe and the consideration was "2

HUNTINGTON



Showing Purchases and Early Settlements. M.H.

coates, fore shertes, seven quarts of licker and eleven ounces of powther".

The grantees were William Rogers, Thomas Weeks, and Jonas Wood, "for themselves and the rest of their associates"; the Indians reserved the right to plant and hunt on the tract which was claimed later by the inhabitants of Smithtown on the ground that they had bought the land from the Nissaquogues who claimed to own it.

Eaton's Neck has a long history and may have been the first land purchased from the natives in the Town of Huntington. The earliest deed is missing but a certificate found in the New Haven Records dated August 17th 1663 mentions a deed for Eaton's Neck granted to Theophilus Eaton in 1646. The record reads in part:

"We whose names are under-written do testifye that Resoroken, Sagamore of Ketanomocke, of Long Island, now called by the English Huntington, Did give and grant to Theophilus Eaton Esq. and Governor of New Haven, a neck of land lying on ye east side of Huntington Harbor (here follows a long description of the bounds). We do all affirm that Resoroken was the sole proprietor and did freely give it to Theophilus Eaton, then Governor of New Haven . . . in the year 1646".

This was signed by the marks of Musquat and four other Indians. The Dutch Secretary Van Tienhoven visited the Neck, which was then the palisaded village of the Matinecock sachem, in 1650 and wrote the following description: "There were formerly in and about this bay great numbers of Indian Plantations, which now lie waste and vacant". Nine years later the neck was inhabited by the English as shown by the recorded proceedings of a trial between its inhabitants and the people of Huntington. In 1662 William Jones who married Hannah, the daughter of Theophilus Eaton, sold the

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More About the Lexington

THE burning of the cotton laden side-wheel passenger steamboat Lexington in Long Island Sound during the night of Jan. 13-14, 1840, with the consequent loss of nearly all on board, was "wilful, savage, horrid murder"; "there was not an officer of the boat who did his duty—each acted for himself only"; "the master was one of the first to desert his post". Such was the editorial dictum of Col. Harry A. Hunt in his Sag Harbor Corrector newspaper of Feb. 29 following the disaster.

H. P. Horton in his very interesting article properly says that accounts vary as to the number who lost their lives on that fateful night with the temperature ten below. He puts the number safely at "more than one hundred."

Rev. Nathaniel S. Prime in his early History of Long Island (p. 40), printed five years after the tragedy, says the number was not exactly ascertained, but that it was known to be at least 118. Thompson (edition of 1918), vol. I, p. 420, gives the number as 130. My information coming indirectly from David Crowley of Patchogue, the second mate, is that the lost numbered 161, passengers and crew.

The Forum writer mentioned above says five persons were saved, all being rescued from floating bales of cotton, and that one of them was driven eastward and rescued at New Gully north of Riverhead. That was mate Crowley then a young man and was alive as late as 1886. (See Thompson p. 416.)

Two others of the ship's personnel, Capt. Stephen Manchester the pilot, Charles B. Smith the fireman, and also Capt. Chester Hilliard of Norwich, the only passenger saved, each rode out a night on separate bales of cotton.

Dr. Clarence A. Wood

A fifth survivor, alike astride a cotton bale, was carried by the ebb tide some fifty miles to a point west of Horton's Point, north of Southold, where he was cast ashore. According to a writer in the Brooklyn Eagle of March 22, 1914, seemingly based on data coming from Mate Crowley, this unidentified half-frozen castaway finally succeeded in reaching Moore's tavern at the foot of Tucker's Lane, Southold.

Astride the cotton bale with Capt. Hilliard also rode for a time Benjamin Cox, one of the Lexington's firemen. By morning the strength of Cox failed and he fell off and was drowned. The two captains and Smith were picked up by the sloop Merchant which had attempted to get out of Bridgeport when the Lexington was seen to be burning, but had

been grounded until the morning high tide.

Mate Crowley said that he, with the deck hands and waiters, drew water and threw on the fire until driven away by the flame. The ship could no longer be steered as the tiller ropes were burned away. When there was no longer hope of saving the Lexington, her commander, Capt. George Childs from Narragansett, told the passengers to take to the small boats of which there were four. A rush was thereupon made for these which being overloaded were soon swamped and overturned. In one was Capt. Childs.

Crowley said he threw overboard the hawser tub and the chaffing board, then a side-plank on which he jumped and from it swam to a bale of cotton that floated near. It is not accurate to say that he was rescued. He rode his bale for two nights and two days. Dur-



Fire Destroyed Old Hotel

The above photograph was taken by the late Hal B. Fullerton about 1900 when the Garden City Hotel was destroyed by a fire which brought apparatus from neighboring villages.

"I lived in Far Rockaway at that time," writes John Good, now a resident of Garden City. "I drove over and got there in time to see it still burning. I came down the old Rockaway Road and tied my pony to a tree on the grounds of St. Paul's School."

ing the night hours he actually slept soundly. In the day time he exerted himself to reach land.

About nine at night he landed near a high bank in the vicinity of Baiting Hollow. Climbing to the top he saw a light in the house of Mathias Hutchinson, which was occupied in 1890 by Nicholas H. Hutchinson. Crowley reached haven and much needed succor a few hours after Samuel Hutchinson, a son of Mathias had returned from Setauket and given an account of the disaster in the Sound.

Many persons prominent in Manhattan and vicinity and in Boston were among the passengers. The names of many are listed in Thompson, vol. 1, p. 417. Among them was Rev. Dr. Charles Follen of Boston, late professor at Harvard University; William H. Williams, grocer of Williamsburg, Brooklyn; Robert Williams of Cold Spring and Platt Van Cott of Stonington, brother of Henry Van Cott of Jamaica.

Capt. Icabod D. Carver of Plymouth of the barque Brontes, was on his way home to be married. Mrs. Russell Jarvis, daughter of Thomas Cordis of Boston, perished with her children, two daughters aged about 12 and 8. Mary Russell, a nurse in the family of George W. Whistler of Stonington, had been married the day before and was going to that place to take leave of her friends.

Among other mariners aboard as passengers were Capt. E. J. Kimball and Capt. B. T. Foster, both of whom had returned after years at sea and were on their way to visit their families in the east.

Adolphus Harnden, superintendent of the Harnden Package Express operating between New York and Boston, was among the lost. He had in charge about \$20,000 in specie and between forty and fifty thousand dollars in bank notes belonging to various persons, mostly brokers in Manhattan. William Albert Green of Provi-

dence also had \$6,500 on his person.

It hardly seems likely that the cotton bale which sustained Mate Crowley for over forty-eight hours was retrieved and by him shipped, as Capt. Horton said, to "his textile plant in Connecticut" and there made into so-called "Lexington shirts". A young second mate is not likely to have owned a factory. A great number of the cotton bales from the Lexington were salvaged along the shores of the Sound. None would question but that

Yankee shrewdness converted many of them into "mementoes of the catastrophe."

Capt. Nathaniel Brown of Smithtown, who afterwards claimed that during the night he dreamed a boat came on shore, rose before dawn and a half hour after sunrise discovered the burned boat. He immediately called his neighbors and they notified Dr. Darling D. Whitney, the coroner at Commack.

About a half mile from the shore in Stony Brook Harbor,

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Deacon Smith's Account Book

AMONG the old documents belonging to the late Mr. Vail Blydenburgh, was an account book of Deacon Epenetus Smith, which was begun in the year 1793. From this book Mrs. Blydenburgh has kindly allowed me to copy the material that makes up this tale of old Smithtown Branch.

The deacon was a versatile man. I rather think he was a cooper by trade, as he mentioned many times money owed him for hooping barrels and casks. Besides church accounts, he attended to some law business and also doctored man and beast.

In 1792 they were either building a new parsonage or repairing an old one. For the chimney of the parsonage "Thomas Negro" carted stone, for which he received two shillings. A bucket for "a rope I found, 2 shillings, 6 pence." (Evidently the Deacon was donating the rope.)

I see I failed to copy how much was paid for digging the well, or what the carpenters received for their work, but feeding said carpenters cost 5 shillings and 6 pence. To make mortar for the chimney, lime was carted from the pond at a cost of 4 shillings.

The deacon had bought wine and bread for the Communion for 2 shillings and 3 pence. Something else he had expended came to 3 shillings, 5 pence, so the church owed him 5 shillings, 8 pence. But alas the collection that day was only 5 shillings, 3 pence.

Isaac Levourse, blacksmith, who lived near Bushwick Church, brought Deacon Smith a sick horse to doctor for which he charged 5 shilling, plus 2 shillings for oats and hay.

Here is the Deacon's recipe for relief of the toothache: "1 large handfull of St. Peters wort, that branches to the

Kate W. Strong

ground; 1 pint from the grease of bacon or gammon, 2 large spoonfulls of Hogs Lardd, 2 large handfulls of fine salt. Then Stew over a slow fire till it turns brown, then strain it, and put where the pain is." Pretty tough on the sufferer to have to wait all that time for relief.

Deacon Epenetus also doctored for "Kings Evil." Kings Evil was the old name for scrofula because it was thought that the king's touch would heal it. This idea started in the time of Edward the Confessor, in 1661. In Charles Second's time, it is said, he touched 92,107 people. George First gave up the practice.

The Deacon's remedy was not nearly as simple. For instance: "Jeremiah Vanderbilt brought his boy Ahran, March the twelfth 1803, with the Kings Evil. He had a sore on his cheek. Put on white, next Ginger Root, next Turpentine and the white of an egg." He

added "marrow fat from Duck Roast boiled strong, washed with the water as hot as he would take it, for three or four times, and he began to mend. Made him a drink of Burdock roots and dried leaves a little frosted, from the tender root. Tousan of poppel bark and Black Alder bark and he began to mend". (Evidently a case of kill or cure.)

Four years before, Deacon Smith had Doctor Samuel Philip's daughter for Kings Evil, but that time he did not tell what he gave her. Mr. Vanderbilt was evidently a friend of the Deacon's as the latter requested letters sent to him in New York be addressed in care of Mr. Vanderbilt.

Very Likely.

I am told that Lake Success is one of the so called "kettles" left by glacial action, due to a large section of ice becoming imbedded there and melting. If this is so, it should make the frigid Mr. Vishinski feel at home.
(Miss) M. K. Partridge, Little Neck



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Forum

Continued from page 226

Peconic Bay froze over so that it was possible to enjoy ice-boating from Jamesport to Robbins Island provided you kept away from the "air-holes". The four foot tide lifted and lowered the vast sheet of ice breaking it up at the shores, and out in the open there were great cracks in the ice that you must keep your runners out of, but there were miles and miles of good safe ice, and it was not with us considered a too dangerous sport.

One winter in particular, in the late seventies, we had an exceptionally good season of ice-boating. The men of the village built the big triangular platform mounted on three steel runners and installed a good sized catboat mast and sail. This was for the school. The school-house was only a minutes run from the beach. At 12 o'clock we all ran for the beach, boys and girls. In five minutes we would be off. We would go to Red Creek, to Indian Island, to Squirestown or to Riverhead and there eat our lunches and have plenty of time for running about the bay and be in our seats at school at one o'clock.

We had a lady teacher that year who had never been on an ice-boat. She came from Yaphank and I remember her name well, but need not mention it here. We always invited her to go with us but she stubbornly refused, until one clear cold and sunny day her curiosity got the better of her and she came. It proved to be a day of tragic indignities for the poor lady. The first of these was the necessity of lying face down on that platform with the whole school. But the girls held her skirts down securely and fastened a blanket about her feet and snuggled up to her and we were off. There was a good stiff northwest breeze and a clear sun and it was cold—but not too cold.

We Jamesport boys spent much of our time in boats. We knew how to sail and we knew our ice-boat. Avoiding the open water at the end of Simmon's Point we swung over into the Cowyard in the lee of Red Creek Point, and then with a suddenness which was almost dangerous we brought her up into the wind and with one runner up in the air she emptied herself of every boy and girl and the teacher all sliding off on the smooth ice, some of them a considerable distance. One of the distance sliders was a very indignant and embarrassed teacher whose feet had been tied up in a blanket. The girls soon had her on her feet and were doing all they could to

Continued on next page

Nassau Shores, Massapequa

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Forum

Continued From Page 234

mollify her. Oh! Yes, we did this every day but the boys had not realized—etc.

The boat flapping idly, head into the wind, sails flapping idly. The sun was shining. The ice was cold. Everybody clambered aboard the ice-boat except the teacher who stood defiantly declaring that she would never ride on it again. She would walk home on the ice. But the pupils were now eating their lunches. Off to the north she could see Jamesport with its tiny white schoolhouse. It was a 3 or 4 mile walk on that ice. Then she sat down on the edge of the platform and began to eat her lunch. But her feet were cold. So one of the girls put her feet up on the platform and wrapped them in the blanket again and you ate your lunch raised on one elbow and back to the cold wind. It was not such a bad lunch when the teacher stopped scolding. The boys and girls were having such a good time.

Then, when nobody was looking in his direction the boy who held the tiller pushed the boom over against the wind just a little. The movement of the boat was imperceptible at first and when it was noticed the sheet was taut and we were making speed. "Stop the boat!" screamed the teacher, "The same way as before?" someone asked. "No don't stop the boat." We were well on our way. Flanders Bay, Meeting House Creek, Indian Island and then up into Riverhead we went, coming to a quiet stop. It was only 12:40.

We could be back at Jamesport in ten minutes. But we had an offended teacher on that ice-boat. No, indeed, she would not go back to Jamesport with us on that terrible thing! She would take the four o'clock train from Riverhead to Jamesport! She did. And we had the whole afternoon on the bay with such a day for ice-boating as comes perhaps only once in a lifetime. We came in however ahead of the four o'clock train and were greeted on the beach by a group of curious fathers and mothers who had been watching us and wondering why there was no school that afternoon. Editor's Note: Mr. Albertson who resides at 3387 Stuyvesant Place N.W., Washington, D. C., has been a Forum reader for nearly 14 years.

A Small World Indeed

The following editorial paragraph in the Madison (N.J.) Eagle was sent us by its publisher, Charles J.

Continued on next page

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Long Island Forum Index

Index of Long Island Forum, years 1938-47 inclusive. About 40 pages compiled by Miss Marguerite V. Doggett, Librarian L. I. Collection, Queens Borough Public Library, Jamaica 2, N. Y. Done by photo offset process. \$1 postpaid. Order from Miss Doggett.

Forum

Continued From Page 235

McDermott, who is remembered on Long Island not alone for his connection with the Forum but as a widely read syndicate columnist for Long Island newspapers:

RAY PATTERSON, former Long Islander, called our attention to an article in the Long Island Forum by Clarence Ashton Wood entitled "Riverhead Boasts A First Lady Too". The first lady was the wife of the President of the United States William Henry Harrison, hero of Tippecanoe. She was born Anna Symmes, the daughter of John and Anna Symmes, who "first located on a farm at Mattituck. Later he moved to a farm near Morristown, N. J., known during a part of the 18th century as Bottle Hill." (Editor's note. And Bottle Hill is now known as Madison and the publisher of the Eagle used to be the book editor of the Long Island Forum and he came to Madison and there met Ray Patterson who used to live in East Marion, L. I., and furthermore, to coin a phrase—It's a small world!)

* * *

Quogue's Old Homestead

By Bea Rogers

Historian, Westhampton Beach

The large tract of land (at Quogue) where the Homestead (Eobson House) once stood was originally owned by Daniel Foster and undoubtedly his farmhouse or part of it was built about 1707. Rufus Foster, son of Daniel, inherited the farm from his father and in time Jabez, son of Rufus, became the owner and was the last male Foster heir to occupy the property.

After the death of Jabez his widow and daughter, Mary King Foster, took in summer guests to supplement the family income. In 1885 Mary King Foster became the wife of Rev. Augustus Dobson

Continued on Page 238

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Fire Island's Sunken Forest

Continued from page 228

does not appear to fully live up to its name, it does not necessarily lose its appeal or its value as a remarkable forest growth. Everytime I enter the place I feel the thrill of the unreal, the unnatural, although I know it is as real, natural and native as anything can be on all Long Island. It is truly Long Island forest—no plant or tree in the forest has been planted by man's hand; all have grown unassisted by humans. And most strangely little or no evidence of plant diseases or insect pests appear in the forest, yet man-made sprays and fumigants are entirely unknown there.

Every effort should be made to induce some responsible group or body to take over the stretch of beach on which Sunken Forest grows and maintain it as a park. Then the character and being of the forest need not disappear as is most probable otherwise. At the present time the forest is visited in December by persons interested in harvesting the holly for commercial purposes. This habit will quickly finish off the holly. Fire is, of course, the greatest danger and every precaution should be taken at all times to prevent total destruction by burning.

It would be satisfying to see how the forest dresses for winter, the deep winter of early February. I wonder if the trees are so closely matted and inter-twiggged as to support the snow like a roofing or do the winds and gales shake the trees so violently that not a single snowflake can lodge upon the branches. It would be easy to count the holly trees and to locate other evergreens whose greenery hides them in summer. Perhaps some cedars would make an appearance against the snow. I would like to know which birds winter over in the forest for certainly some must take advantage of

the protection the forest affords and the availability of the fresh water supply at the sphragnum swamp.

Sunken Forest may be as interesting in winter as it is in summer. Some day I want to find out.

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Model of Old Ohio

I too am interested in the old Ohio having heard odds and ends about the ship, and even seeing an old tin-type photo of her, moored to Main Street wharf, here in Greenport. I also remember seeing a very good model of her, in the Library, on the Navy base at Norfolk, Va., during the war years.

Jerry McCarthy, Greenport.

Forum

Continued From Page 236

and together they continued to conduct a successful and popular summer boarding-house for a number of years.

Shortly before Mrs. Dobson's death the Homestead was seriously damaged by fire and the repairs made afterward were done in a cheap and haphazard fashion. At the time of the fire it was discovered that the outside walls of the house were packed with seaweed which probably provided a fairly good type of insulation. Another point of interest concerning the old house is the fact that British troops were quartered there in the Revolutionary days.

In the latter 1920's Mrs. McCoy and her daughter Charlotte leased the homestead and for a few years conducted a delightful tea-room and gift-shop which was called the Blue Moon. After Mrs. McCoy's death the house remained vacant until 1941 when the property was purchased by Mr. Richard S. Maynard. He was anxious to preserve the old landmark but it had fallen into such bad repair that it could not be saved and was torn down. When the house was demolished a small tin box was found in the chimney containing the following message:

"This chimney first built by Daniel Foster 1773. Daniel's son Rufus lived and died here. Rufus' son Jabez lived and died here. Jabez's daughter Lydia H. Halsey and Mary K. Foster Dobson now live here and rebuilt this chimney. Architect W. B. Fordham, Speonk. Mason, Hermin Terrell and M. Smith from East Quogue.

"May the blessing of God rest upon the descendants of this household as it has followed the ancestors.

"Quogue Homestead, November 14, 1892.

"M. K. Foster Dobson

"Chas. F. Halsey, Albert Smith, Sammy Hinkmen, Wm. S. Raynor, John Ba(?)ena.

"Grover Cleveland elected for President Nov. 8th, 1892."

Continued on back cover

Reminders

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Huntington Town Indian Deeds

Continued from page 250

neck to Captain Robert Seeley for fifty pounds.

The territory described in the Indian deed included with Eaton's Neck all the tract east of Northport Harbor to the Nissequake River at Smithtown and extended south to the middle of the island. This of course was in flagrant violation of other titles but the inhabitants of the Neck were successful in establishing their claim by three successive suits with Huntington and this town never gave any deeds or grants on the neck although it seems to have been regarded as lying within the town.

There are many references in the Town Records as to the validity of the Indian land titles. The natives themselves possessed little more than the rights of herbage and the privileges of hunting and fishing. For many years the settlers accepted such titles without question and without authority from any sovereign power. In 1665 Governor Nicolls granted a patent to the town by which it was recognized as a political corporation under the sovereignty of the King of England.

The Duke's Laws of 1665 prohibited the sale of arms and ammunition to the Indians but a year earlier Huntington had enacted laws for the protection of the natives. No purchase of Indian land was allowed without permission of the Governor. Injuries done to Indians were assured as speedy redress as wrongs done to white men. No person was permitted to sell, give or barter guns, powder, bullets or any vessels without a license and no person was permitted to sell strong drink to the natives under heavy penalty for violation. The English were required to prevent their cattle from destroying the Indian corn. Because of these just precautions no at-

tack was ever made on the settlement.

Huntington people made many purchases of land on the south shore including eleven necks extending into Great South Bay. Thus the town ran "from sea to sea", an area of about one hundred and sixty square miles. The southern portion was separated from Huntington in 1872 and became the town of Babylon.

The landward shore line of Great South Bay is deeply indented by inlets and the mouths of small streams which divide the land into numerous necks, some of which were inhabited by the natives but were coveted by the English for the growth of salt grass which they gathered and shipped to other parts of the province for use as fodder during the winter. This salt hay was highly valued as there was no English hay in this country for a hundred years after its settlement.

These eleven necks extended over a distance of fifteen miles between the present village of Babylon and Carman River, a little to the west of Amityville. The western portion was occupied by the Marsapeagues and the eastern part by the Secatogues and these two tribes are said to have given twenty-five different deeds to the English. At various times between 1688 and 1705 the Secatogues gave ten deeds to the colonists and as late as 1755 a remnant of the tribe ceded to the Town of Babylon the last parcel of Secatogue land.

After the necks were sold the fresh meadows as far

north as the "Indian Path" soon followed and finally the "bushy plains" or uplands were taken up. The early deeds were usually made to individuals and their associates and the land was later divided into smaller holdings. Later deeds conveyed the land to the town in its corporate capacity, after which it was partitioned at Town Meeting or by grants by the Trustees. At times the land appears to have been occupied by settlers before the actual purchase was made.

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BOOKS

These items for Long Island students, libraries and collectors are now available. For particulars address the Long Island Forum.

Indian Place-Names on Long Island and Islands Adjacent. William Wallace Tooker. 1911. 314p.

Flushing, Past and Present. A Historical Sketch. Rev. Ephraim Whitaker, D. D. 1860. 180p.

The Social History of Flatbush, and Manners and Customs of the Dutch Settlers in Kings County. Gertrude Lefferts Vanderbilt. 1899-1882. 351p.

History of Long Island, from its first settlement by Europeans to the year 1845, with special reference to its ecclesiastical concerns. Nathaniel S. Prime. 1845. 420p.

Records, Town of Brookhaven, up to 1800. Compiled by Town Clerk. 1880. 219p.

Records, Town of Brookhaven, 3 Vols. 1657-1798. Published by Town. 1930-31. 1283p.

Bi-Centennial History of Suffolk County. 1885. 125p.

Antiquities of the Parish Church, Jamaica, including Newtown and Flushing. Henry Onderdonk, Jr. 1880. 162p.

Documents and Letters Intended to Illustrate the Revolutionary Incidents of Queens County. Henry Onderdonk, Jr. 1846. 264p.

Annals of Newtown in Queens County, New York. James Riker Jr. 1852. 437p.

Collections of the N. Y. Historical Society for 1869. 560p.

Records of the Town of Smithtown, Long Island, N. Y. Wm. S. Pelletreau. 1898. 503p.

John Eliot's First Indian Teacher and Interpreter, Cockenoe-De-Long Island, and the story of his career from the earliest records. Wm. Wallace Tooker. 1896. 60p.

History of the Reformed Protestant Dutch Church of Gravesend, Kings County, N. Y. Wm. H. Stillwell. 1892. 88p.

Tredwell's Reminiscences of Men and Things on Long Island, two vols. Danl. M. Tredwell. 1912. Heavy paper bound 350p.

Old Dutch Houses of Brooklyn. Maud Esther Dilliard. 1845.

Antiquities of Long Island, to which is added a bibliography by Henry Onderdonk, Jr. Edited by Frank Moore. Gabriel Furman. 1875. 478p.

Rambles in Colonial Byway. 2 vols. Rufus Rockwell Wilson. 1901.

History of Shelter Island. Ralph G. Duval. 1932. 229p.

History of Long Island First Edition. 1 vol. 1839. 530p. Benj. F. Thompson.

Journal of the Life and Religious Labors of Elias Hicks. 1832. 451p. (By himself). Needs re-binding.

Stony Brook Secrets. Edward A. Lapham. 1942. 146p.

Spin Your Globe to Long Island. Frederick Simpich. (Reprinted From National Geographic) 1940.

Charter and Ordinances of the City of Boston. 1834. 300p.

Cradle of the Trotter, A. Goshen Turf History. Elizabeth Sharts. 1946. 247p.

Old Southold Town's Tercentenary. Ann Hallock Currie-Bell. 1940. 161p.

Long Island's Greatest Newspaper. Arthur L. Hodges. 1931. 132p.

Father Knickerbocker Rebels. Thos. Jefferson Wertenbaker. 1949. 308p.

The Hurricane of 1938 on Eastern Long Island. Ernest S. Clowes. 1939. 67p.

Nassau County, The Netherland of the New World. Arthur L. Hodges. 1940. 82p.

1902 Reprint of A Brief Description of New York (including Long Island), Daniel Denton. 1670. Only 250 copies printed.

Memorial of the Late Honorable David S. Jones. 1849. With appendix containing notices of the Jones Family, of Queens County (Nassau). 1849.

Loafing Down Long Island, Charles Hanson Towne. 1921.

Pamphlets by the Forum

First Train to Greenport, 1844, by Dr. Clarence A. Wood, for more than 40 years secretary to Judges of the Court of Appeals. 50 cents.

History of the Storms and Gales on Long Island, by Osborn Shaw, Official Historian, Town of Brookhaven; *The Hurricane of 1938*, by Dorothy Quick, Poetess and Novelist. Limited, numbered edition. Out of print.

History of Setauket Presbyterian Church, by Kate W. Strong, with introduction by the Rev. Frank M. Kerr, Hempstead. Limited number edition of 200. Sold by Miss Strong, Setauket, L.I. Out of print.

The Talented Mount Brothers, by Jacqueline Overton, author of "Long Island's Story" and Librarian of the Children's Library, Westbury, with introduction by Harry Peters, art collector, critic, author and lecturer. Limited numbered edition of 500. Sold by author. 50 cents.

Long Island Whaling, by Nathaniel R. Howell, founder of Historically Minded Group. 30 cents.

David Frothingham, Pioneer Editor, by Nancy Boyd Willey. For sale by Mrs. M. M. Willey, L. I. Herald House, Sag Harbor. 50 cents.

Long Island's First Italian, 1639, by Berne A. Pyrke, former New York State Commissioner of Agriculture and Markets. 50 cents.

Streamlining a County Welfare Service, by Edwin W. Wallace, Commissioner Public Welfare, Nassau County. 25 cents.

To Florida and Back from Long Island (in 29-Foot Fishing Skiff), by Captain Charles Suydam, Jr., off-shore fisherman extraordinary. 50 cents.

Ezra L'Hommedieu, Island Statesman, by Dr. Clarence Ashton Wood. A biographical sketch of Southold Town's famous native son, "Father of the Board of Regents". One Dollar.

History of Patchogue Congregational Church, by Frank Overton, M.D. 50 cents.

History of the Long Island State Parks, by Chester R. Blakelock, Executive Secretary, Long Island State Park Commission. Republished from Bailey's Long Island History. For particulars address author, Babylon, N. Y.

Birthplace of John Howard Payne, by Dr. Clarence Ashton Wood, Contributing Editor Long Island Forum. A comprehensive presentation of conclusive proof that the author of "Home, Sweet Home" was born in New York City. Limited edition. One Dollar.

A Small Boat Trip to Florida (Winter of 1947-48), by Captain Charles Suydam, Jr. 50 cents.

True Tales from the early days of Long Island, as told by Kate W. Strong, based on records, documents and other data in her private collection 12 Pamphlets, each one containing a number of Miss Strong's original stories, reprinted from the Long Island Forum. For particulars address Miss Kate W. Strong, The Cedars, Setauket, L. I.

Earliest English Schools on Long Island, by Nathaniel R. Howell, Town Historian Islip, Councillor Suffolk County Historical Society, Leader Historically Minded Group. Sold by the author, East Islip, N. Y., postpaid 50 cents.

The Pottery at Huntington, by Romanah Sammis, Official Historian, Town of Huntington. For sale by Huntington Historical Society. 25 cents.

Distribution of Wild Orchids on Long Island by Roy Latham, well known authority. Limited, numbered edition. Sold by author, Orient, L. I. 50 cents.

Five Thousand Years of Relief, by Edwin W. Wallace, Commissioner Public Welfare, Nassau County; President, New York Association of Public Welfare Officials. Out of print.

Tales of An Island and Its People, by Dr. Clarence A. Wood. A group of seven sketches on Long Island's famous horses and horsemen of yesteryear, and other historical subjects. 50 cents.

More About the Lexington

Continued from page 232

Smithtown Bay, one of the Lexington's small boats was found frozen in the ice. In the boat were the bodies of the above named Mr. Green, Henry C. Craig of New York, Charles Bracket of New York and David Green of Philadelphia. Other bodies subsequently found were those of Stephen Waterbury of New York, Jacob C. Bates, Philo Upson, N. P. Newman, steward of the Lexington, and an unidentified boy of about four.

Dr. Whitney took charge of the bodies found in Stony Brook Harbor and assembled a coroners jury which met at two the following Sunday afternoon. They sat for nine days. The jury was composed of Benjamin Vincent, foreman; Joseph E. Mott, James Goadby, Thomas E. Burlaw, S. H. Henriott, Teunis Fokkes, James Green, P. M. P. Durando, Jr., Edward V. McVeagh, A. S. Chace, Abraham Crevelia, Robert Tuttle, Richard M. Roe and Henry V. Davis.

Foreman Vincent and Mr. Mott exonerated Capt. Manchester, the pilot, from any blame. The other twelve, a doctor, a dentist, an agent, a grate-setter, a merchant, a tailor, a shoemaker, a printing press maker, two clerks and two constables, found that the Lexington was a first rate boat, with an excellent steam engine and a boiler suitable for burning wood but not coal; that the inspectors of steamboats, either from ignorance or neglect had suffered the Lexington to navigate the Sound at the imminent risk of the lives and property of the passengers; also that inasmuch as the engine could not be stopped because of the rapid progress of the fire, with presence of mind of the officers and a strict discipline of the crew a large portion of the passengers and crew, if not the whole, might have been saved.

It was the verdict of the

twelve that the conduct of the officers of the Lexington deserved the severest censure of the community; that the captain and the pilot left the boat to her own guidance and sought their own safety regardless of the fate of the passengers. Capt. Childs, being dead, could not answer the charge that he sought safety and thus violated a primary tradition of the sea.

There was much public criticism also of Capt. William Terrell in command of the sloop Improvement which was within four or five miles of the Lexington at the time she began to burn but who did not immediately go to her assistance. He admitted that if he had done so, he could have saved a great number of lives. His excuse was that by doing so he would have lost his tide over the bar at the port for which he was bound. Neither he nor others on his boat were called before the jury.

Dissatisfaction was also expressed that the inhabitants of Bridgeport, Norwich and other places in the vicinity of the burning did not make more strenuous exertion to rescue passengers.

The Lexington was well built and strong, and very fast for those days. Her length was 220 feet and her beam but 26 feet. Being of less breadth than others, she, consequently, was not a general favorite with the public as a passenger boat. She was owned by Cornelius Vanderbilt and others as The Sound Steamboat Company.

Like other steamboats of



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her time the Lexington had no staterooms. Her large cabin was used as a dining room and as a saloon for social features.

On the fateful evening, about seven o'clock, the passengers had settled back at ease in their chairs anticipating a social affair in which two Boston actors, Comedian Henry J. Finn, and Charles Everle as well as others were to participate.

In August 1850 the charred hull of the Lexington was raised from where she had lain ten and a half years in 130 feet of water.

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Leigh to Exhibit Oils of the Old West

The colorful country of our West now calls to many minds a land of oil-field riches, but the Old West before the days of the derrick is perpetuated in the paintings of W. R. Leigh, America's much loved painter of "Westerns," and the last of the celebrated trio of Remington, Russell and Leigh who have immortalized this phase of early American life. Cowboys, horses and Indians are vividly depicted by Leigh in action which this artist, a descendant of Pocahontas who has spent much of his life in faraway places, knows like "nobody's business."

Two 1951 exhibitions of his work are scheduled for New York this

winter at the Grand Central Art Galleries. The dates are still tentative, but anyone who wants to be sure not to miss these shows may send a card now to the artist's wife, who is founder of the Traphagen School of Fashion, 1680 Broadway, New York. Mrs. Leigh will send the dates, when they are announced, and invitations to the exhibitions, for she is also one of her husband's most enthusiastic fans.

Every man, woman and youth who feels the excitement of the original Western scene will thrill to these pictures. Followers of "Hop-along Cassidy," too, are sure to be admirers of Leigh. Those who would like to have reproductions of a number of these paintings can probably still obtain copies of Collier's for November 11, in which they appear in full color.



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CLOSED TUESDAYS

Forum

Continued From Page 238

Church 275 Years Old

The "Old First" Presbyterian Church at Smithtown Branch is celebrating its 275th anniversary. Founded in 1675 as a town-wide institution, it was at first located at Nissequogue from whence the old building was moved to the present property in 1750. Among the famous people who have attended service here was the late William J. Gaynor, one time mayor of New York, who had an estate at nearby St. James.

O.E.S.

* * *

It is most interesting. Harold J. Ryan, East Setauket.

* * *

Deale, Not Dale

The letter in the November Forum was from Edith Corey Deale (not Dale, as printed). Mrs. Deale, a resident of Babylon, is the widow of the eminent Dr. William H. Deale.

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